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being involves the human factor. This section is primarily concerned only with the secular aspects of law and justice, in so far as they can be distinguished. Examples of a positive and of a negative-religious rule may be found in the section on Religion.

The infringement of a religious rule of law brings unpleasant results, but there is frequently no idea of obeying the rule as a good in itself. A Carib is surrounded by a vast army of spirits, spirits of the bush and of the streams. Some are characteristically mischievous or malevolent, others are merely finicky and jealous of their rights, which include the treatment to which they are entitled. A Carib must follow the rules of conduct which will keep him out of trouble with the spirits. When he wants positive responses from the supernatural powers, he consults a medicine man or piaiyen. It is practically impossible for a layman to attract the favorable attention of the spirits directly.

On the secular side, law and justice are highly personal. Only in cases, to be described later, in which an individual by the multiplicity and pertinacity of his offenses makes himself a public nuisance or a public menace do the members of the group take united action against him. And in such cases it appears that the group action is taken as the result of a sum of individual grievances rather than from a conscious sociological consideration for the welfare of the group as an entity.

Practically all secular offenses are punished by the victim, or as we would say, the plaintiff, who is assisted in certain cases by specialists having mastery of techniques involving spiritual powers. A man's brothers, real or classificatory, will assist him in these matters upon occasion. The latter practise furnishes the basis for a loose sort of collective responsibility. Signs of a formalized grouping of relatives are, however, lacking.

In a group such as this, where public law is all but excluded by private law, little attention is paid to abstract ideals of right and wrong. A Carib is only mildly interested in offenses suffered by other individuals. Adultery, for example, is regarded as a delightfully exciting game except when one's own wife becomes involved. Retribution is therefore the important factor in punishment.

The most serious offenses are homicide, poisoning, use of sorcery, theft, and adultery. Homicide is justifiable when used as retribution for a clear case of adultery or when it is obviously due to

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682 accident; in all other cases it is subject to retribution. Poisoning
● 627 may be distinguished from homicide in cases where it is not fatal;
poisoning itself is used as a form of retribution, but secretly, and
[154] in any case, if the poisoner is discovered, the intended victim
feels that an offense has been committed against him. The same
is true of sorcery which is used as a means of retaliation. Prac-
tically speaking, however, if a Carib who has committed an offense
discovers his victim using either poison or sorcery against him as
a retaliation, he devotes his efforts to self-protection rather than
[208] to counter retaliation. Public opinion supports the use of poison
and sorcery as means of retaliating for an unprovoked offense.
On the other hand, the use of these measures because of mere
dislike, sadism, drunkenness, or anger is regarded as offensive and
properly to be punished.

685 Theft is the misappropriation of another individual's property.
All goods are individually owned among the Caribs. A man owns,
for instance, his field, house, hunting and fishing equipment,
canoes, ornaments, tools, the game he has bagged. A woman
owns the implements which she uses in field and house, the pottery
which she makes or acquires, the basketry (which is made, how-
ever, by the male members of the family), her clothing and orna-
[177] ments. Where the Indians have come in contact with prospectors
for gold, each man has private ownership in the gold creeks which
424 he has discovered and which he may sell. A sorcerer and a medicine
551 man each has ownership in his techniques and knowledge. All
the foregoing types of property are alienable in one way or another.
But each individual may also be said to own his or her personal
name, which is alienable under no circumstances. To prevent theft
and magical misuse of the personal name, an Indian guards it
closely and allows only trusted intimates to know what it is.
Names, for example, Big Frog, Curly Hair, Haimara (a fish), are
invented by the mother and given to the child in infancy. They
are based on supposed resemblance of the child to some animal
and imply a faint spiritual bond between the person and said
animal.[1] Communally held forms of property, if they may be so
called, are certain songs and traditions.

000 As in many primitive communities, in spite of the importance

[1] This is, however, only a hint of personal totemism or guardian spirit concept. I have found no trace of a set of formulated rights and duties between the person and the animal involved.

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tion room made of palm leaves. Here the practitioner calls the spirit which is harming his patient. He tells the spirit that it must desist, otherwise he will call the tiger spirit, which will devour the offending spirit. The theory of the above described shooting process is this. Although the piaiyen is spoken of as shooting his victim, he ceases to be the active agent once he has convoked a spirit. The stones which are projected are used by the spirits in the same way in which arrows are used by human beings. The piaiyen is a passive agent at the service of the spirit.

Direct personal retribution for an offense may be used in cases where the culprit is caught red-handed. If a man surprises another committing adultery with his wife, immediate violence will be the result. Fists, cutlasses, bows and arrows, or guns will be employed. A good many petty grievances also come to blows, usually disputes arising during cassiri sprees. When a man is sober, he prefers to seek satisfaction in a more secret manner. It sometimes happens that, as a result of a fight, two settlements are officially at odds with one another; members of the respective settlements are forbidden by a consensus of opinion to have anything to do with those of the other. In case a member of one settlement transgresses this prohibition and enters into friendly relations with the other group, the headman of his own group may attempt to use either oral or physical coercion to enforce conformity.

Perhaps the most interesting of the forms of personal retribution is kanaima, a cult which is found among practically all of the Indians of the Guianas.[1]

If all other means of obtaining redress have failed, a man may decide to become a kanaima. This is a very serious step because it means that he must leave family and friends, must undergo extreme privations and social ostracism, must devote all his life and energies to the accomplishment of his purpose. The facts concerning this strange cult are difficult to determine because I have not succeeded in interviewing any individual who would admit having been a kanaima. This indicates that membership in the kanaima cult is itself an offense, while on the other hand it may be used as a path to punishment. The beliefs and attitudes concerning the cult are, however, herewith briefly set forth.

[1] Roth, 1915, *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-lore of the Guiana Indians*, Chap. 18. Farabee, 1924, *The Central Caribs*.

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the going is good." I know of one man on the Barama who has been ejected from six consecutive settlements in this way, so that he has become a permanent outcast. 626

It is apparent that the great majority of punishments are handled by individuals. The tendency is to carry out the retaliation as secretly as possible. But why this bashfulness and fear of coming out into the open when settling accounts with a wrongdoer? The Caribs, when questioned directly, reply that secrecy prevents further reprisals and also prevents the culprit from protecting himself against a deserved punishment. I believe that the social function of keeping these matters under cover is to prevent rifts from reaching the surface, so to speak, and thus splitting the group apart. A Carib group lacks strong central authority of any kind. In the absence of adequate political, judicial, or police authority, secretive methods of punishment have evolved as the only possible means of enforcing the "law" without destroying group life. When a man sets out to punish an offense he usually attempts to keep his activities secret, not only from the object of his punishment, but also from other members of the settlement. Only rarely is open violence resorted to or are other members of the group, such as relatives, admitted to the case. 627 182 621

It may be asked, however, if the looseness of the group is not due to the unorganized condition of the legal and penal programs. It is obvious that the absence of a socialized or public method of determining guilt, such as a court, leaves many of the antagonisms in society uncomposed. It is true that cases which come out into the open and are punished openly, such as the killing of the adulterer, appear before the court of public opinion. But many grievances, as we have seen, are handled secretly, and the guilt of certain parties is often based only on suspicion. In such cases punishment may fall on innocent parties, who naturally take offense and retaliate. Consequently, the solidarity of the group is likely to suffer.

Ignoring the theoretical question as to the relative effect of external as compared with internal conditions on the institutions of a society, I believe that in the case of the Barama Caribs external environmental and political factors have played the preponderant part in molding the institutions of this society as they

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621 exist at present. In this region a hunting, fishing, and agricultural
627 life restricts the size of the group and isolates it. Only a small
182 group with a wide territory about it can exist, if the people are to have sufficient animal food. Furthermore, the available crop-raising soil in any one spot will support only a small population, because of the fact that cassava requires a drained sandy loam, a type of soil which is found only in small and widely scattered areas in the jungle. This soil, even when located, will, however, produce only two good crops, after which the field must be abandoned and a new one cut, making the disposition of the fields and the membership of any given settlement unstable. Even the term of existence of the settlement itself is usually limited. Hunting operations as carried on here also make for social instability and individuality, because hunting can be done most successfully by one man and seldom in parties of more than four. It is also often necessary for a man to be away from home for several days following game, and since whenever possible a Carib takes his wife and children with him when he is away over night, this factor also contributes to the looseness of the established group.

177 Even so, it seems that a stronger organization than the present
621 was formerly maintained for purposes of war and defense. Since the early part of the nineteenth century, however, the European political control of the colony has succeeded in repressing intertribal warfare. With their cultural background, therefore, the Caribs have found environmental conditions and exterior political conditions unfavorable to the development of political power and group solidarity. As a consequence, I think, legal, judicial, and penal institutions which otherwise would support such a solidarity, show little formal development.

RELIGION

776 **Supernatural Beings.** The Carib world is jointly inhabited by human beings and a number of supernatural powers. There are two kinds of supernatural beings, spirits and ghosts. The former are independent beings or powers, the latter represent the souls of dead human beings. (Spirit, akuru; ghost, yumbupa akasang.) The supernatural beings of the first class, which we will call spirits, inhabit the land, the water, the air, and at some time

175 622 A headman 103 was recognized in each settlement (John Miller in Savari), but his authority rested on his influence. Aspects of personality, the number of relatives, as well as physical strength were factors in the choice of headman. Although the duties of headman lacked definition, for the most part they involved coalescing group opinion and action. All of this was done informally. Group action 175 627 would be taken against individuals who threatened the pattern of sharing resources and rendering assistance within the settlement. Ostracism, exile, or, more rarely, violence would be employed (Gillin 1934:337).

175 [648] [701] [622] At this time, the Upper Barama River Caribs constituted an indigenous population within a British colony. In this colonial environment, there was no organization among these Caribs for war or defense which would compel leadership (Gillin 1934:344). Dispersed in the 175 628 rain forest, remote from the center of European power, there was no other basis for unity among this population. Before extensive regional trade and a money economy were introduced by the mining companies, these dispersed settlements tended to be closed with regard to patterns of obtaining and sharing subsistence resources. Exchanges *177 621 among settlements involved shifts of personnel. Increasingly, the boundary of the resource sharing social unit has become constricted within the larger, more stabilized settlements around centralized networks of regional exchange.

Organization for Gold Mining

*179 592 464 In addition to centralizing settlements, employment and other market opportunities provided by gold mining activities from 1940 to